

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01 CU-04 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03

SS-20 RSC-01 A-01 CPR-02 SY-04 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

L-03 DODE-00 SCA-01 NEA-10 H-03 SCI-06 NIC-01 OPR-02

PRS-01 PA-04 PPT-02 VO-03 DRC-01 /124 W

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R 011426Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8450

INFO USIA WASHDC

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: MFA PRESS CHIEF MEETS PRESS

REF: MOSCOW 3817

1. SUMMARY: AS PROMISED DURING AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON HIM MARCH 18, MFA PRESS CHIEF V.N. SOFINSKIY ADVISED EMBASSY APRIL 26 THAT HE WAS READY TO RECEIVE AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT CORPS IN HIS OFFICE EARLY MONDAY MORNING APRIL 29. FOURTEEN CORRESPONDENTS (EVERY BUREAU EXCEPT TIME) SHOWED UP AND TWO AND ONE HALF HOUR MEETING RAN THROUGH NINE-POINT AGENDA PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED BY THEM TO SOFINSKIY, ONE OR TWO CORRESPONDENTS ASSIGNED TO PRESENT EACH ITEM. MEETING WAS CIVILIZED IN TONE AND OCCASIONALLY CONSTRUCTIVE. EACH SIDE SEEMED TO EMERGE WITH SOMEWHAT IMPROVED ESTIMATE OF THE OTHER, WITH CORRESPONDENTS, HOWEVER, WAITING TO SEE CONCRETE RESULTS. PRESS/CULT COUNSELOR WAS PRESENT IN SPECIFIED ROLE OF OBSERVER AND REP OF EMBASSY BUT NOT, AT THEIR REQUEST, OF CORRESPONDENTS WHO WISHED ESTABLISH THEIR AUTONOMY. FOLLOWING ACCORDING TO AGENDA POINTS ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF MEETING. END SUMMARY.

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2. PLANS FOR COVERAGE OF PRESIDENTIAL VISIT. CORRESPONDENTS

ASKED PARTICULARLY THAT THEY BE GIVEN TRAVEL AND ACCESS RIGHTS EQUAL TO THOSE GRANTED VISITING AMERICAN PRESS. SOFINSKIY RESPONDED EQUALLY THAT THEIR INCLUSION WAS REALLY MATTER TO BE WORKED OUT BEFOREHAND BETWEEN CORRESPONDENTS AND WHITE HOUSE PRESS OFFICE. TRAVEL FOR ALL WAS A PROBLEM OF AVAILABLE AIRCRAFT SPACE. IN RESPONSE SUGGESTION, SOFINSKIY AGREED ANOTHER MEETING CLOSER TO VISIT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE AND USEFUL, AND INTRODUCED ASSISTANT VALENTIN ANDREYEVICH KHAZOV AS CHIEF LIAISON OFFICER FOR VISIT.

3. EXIT-ENTRY VISAS. SOFINSKIY AGAIN REFERRED TO WHAT HE REGARDED AS PROBLEM OF GRANTING THIS PRIVILEGE TO ALL CORRESPONDENTS IF IT WERE GRANTED TO AMERICANS. HOWEVER, HE SAID, IT WAS BEING STUDIED.

4. INTERNAL TRAVEL PRIVILEGES AND 48-HOUR NOTE SIMILAR TO DIPLOMATS. PROTRACTED PRESENTATION OF DIFFICULTIES, DELAYS AND FRUSTRATIONS ATTENDANT ON ARRANGING TRAVEL, WAS COUNTERED BY SOFINSKIY, SURPRISINGLY, BY LINE THAT "WE ARE JUST A POOR COUNTRY" WITHOUT SUFFICIENT HOTEL BEDS, RENT-A-CARS, AND OTHER FACILITIES NEWSMEN IN U.S. AND ENGLAND ARE USED TO. CENTRAL AND LOCAL CONTROLS ARE AN EFFORT TO ENSURE GOOD HANDLING AND TO SPARE CORRESPONDENTS DISCOMFORT, RATHER THAN ANY MANIFESTATION OF ILL WILL (NE NASHAVINA, A NASHA BEDA). SOME EYES REMAINED DRY BUT IT WAS EFFECTIVE NON-ANSWER TO BEWILDERING PROBLEM OF MULTIPLE CLEARANCES (OVIR, MFA PRESS, INTOURIST, UPDK, NOVOSTI, AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES) THAT CAN BE INVOKED ON ANY TRIP PROPOSAL.

5. EXTENSION OF NEW MOSCOW OBLAST REGULATIONS TO CORRESPONDENTS. SUGGESTION THAT RECIPROCITY CALLED FOR THIS LIBERALIZATION OF CONTROLS WAS PASSED WITHOUT COMMENT.

6. ACCESS TO HOUSE OF JOURNALISTS COMPARABLE TO NATIONAL PRESS CLUB. SOFINSKIY STATED MAIN DIFFERENCE WAS DOM JOURNALISTOV ADMITTED ONLY SOVIET CITIZENS, BUT AGREED TO INVESTIGATE POSSIBILITIES.

7. PROBLEMS OF COVERING DEMONSTRATIONS IN MOSCOW. AP AND UPI COMBINED TO QUESTION AT LENGTH LEGALITY AND PROPRIETY OF POLICE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MEASURES TO FRUSTRATE THEIR COVERAGE OF JEWISH PROTEST AND SIMILAR STREET DEMONSTRATIONS. AP CITED FRESH INSTANCE (APRIL 27) OF BRIEF DETENTION THEIR STAFF MEMBER FOR INNOCENTLY PHOTOGRAPHING IN MOSCOW PET MARKET. REMARKING THAT CORRESPONDENTS WERE FREE TO COVER MAY ONE "DEMONSTRATIONS" IN RED SQUARE, SOFINSKIY CONTRIVED NOT TO ANSWER THIS ITEM AND TO INDICATE WITHOUT BEING ANTAGONISTIC THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF EVEN CONSIDERING IT.

8. IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS WITH PRESS DIVISION. SOFINSKIY COMMITTED HIS STAFF TO START ANSWERING LETTERS, BUT ASKED CORRESPONDENTS TO REALIZE THAT SOME OF THEIR REQUESTS FOR COVERAGE WERE HARD TO ARRANGE SIMPLY BECAUSE TRADITIONALLY SOVIET OFFICIALS DO NOT LIKE PUBLICITY, DON'T LIKE TO GET THEIR PICTURES IN PAPERS.

9. DIRECT ACCESS TO INTERVIEW SOVIET OFFICIALS. SOFINSKIY REITERATED THAT "MODESTY" OF SOVIET OFFICIALS NECESSITATED INTERCESSION OF PRESS DIVISION: "YOU NEED OUR HELP." NEWSWEEK FLOATED PROPOSITION THAT CORRESPONDENTS MIGHT SEE FEWER OF TYPES PRESS DIVISION FOUND OBJECTIONABLE IF MORE STRAIGHT TYPES WERE MADE AVAILABLE. SOFINSKIY RESPONDED THAT PRESS DIVISION HAD BEEN AT WORK ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOVIET MINISTRIES TO IMPROVE THEIR PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORTS ALONG COMMON WESTERN LINES. HE SAID NEW POLICY WOULD SHORTLY MANIFEST ITSELF IN REGULAR PRESS RELEASES ON JOINT US/USSR SPACE PROJECTS. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOVIET UNION HAD BEEN WEAK IN COMMUNICATING ITS ACHIEVEMENTS THROUGH MEDIUM OF WORLD PRESS AND IMPLIED HIS INTENTION TO CORRECT SITUATION.

10. ENCOURAGEMENT OF TRIPS FOR IN-DEPTH COVERAGE ON INITIATIVE OF INDIVIDUAL JOURNALISTS (AS OPPOSED TO MFA-IMPOSED GROUP TRIPS). SOFINSKIY LISTENED POLITELY TO THIS LAST ITEM, AS HE HAD THROUGHOUT, AND MADE VAGUELY ENCOURAGING NOISES.

11. AT CLOSE OF SESSION CBS TOOK OCCASION TO OUTLINE ITS FRUSTRATIONS TRYING TO GET FILM CREWS FROM NOVOSTI AND HANDED SOFINSKIY APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION ITS OWN CAMERAMAN.

12. COMMENT. THIS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN USEFUL EXERCISE IN MOVING FROM HOSTILE CONFRONTATION TOWARDS A RELATIONSHIP MORE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LIKE NEGOTIATION BETWEEN NATURAL BELLIGERENTS. EMBASSY WILL ENCOURAGE A SECOND MEETING CLOSER TO PRESIDENT'S VISIT AND PERIODICALLY THEREAFTER. MEANWHILE SUGGEST CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN IN WASHINGTON TO RESIDENT CORRESPONDENT'S PLIGHT AS EXPRESSED BY THEIR REQUEST (PARA TWO ABOVE) FOR GREATER EQUITY IN COVERAGE MAJOR AMERICAN VISITS.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, THE PRESS, MEETINGS, JOURNALISTS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, TRAVEL CONTROLS  
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**Draft Date:** 01 MAY 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Authority:** blochd0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 3  
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**Reference:** MOSCOW 3817  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** blochd0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 15 JUN 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <05 JUN 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <14 JAN 2003 by garlanwa>; WITHDRAWN <13 Jun 2005 by BoyleJA, PRIVACY>; RELEASED <15 JUN 2005 by powellba2>; APPROVED <17 JUN 2005 by blochd0>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** MFA PRESS CHIEF MEETS PRESS  
**TAGS:** PFOR, UR, US, (SOFKINSKIY, V N)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005